

SENATE BILL 3309

By Burks

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-50-801 and Title 49, Chapter 6, relative to home school students and athletics.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-3050, is amended by adding the following language as new subsection (e):

(e)

(1) A home school student shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at the public school to which the student would be assigned or authorized to attend according to the LEA, provided that:

(A) The student is enrolled in a home school conducted by the student's parent or legal guardian;

(B) The student registers as a home school student with the local director of schools by August 1 of the school year in which the student desires to participate in interscholastic athletics. Registration for a student who is home schooled under subdivision (a)(2) or (a)(3) shall only require notification to the director of schools by the parent or legal guardian that the student is home schooled. Registration shall not subject such student to any of the requirements of subsection (b);

(C) The student meets the same academic and conduct standards required of other participants on the school's interscholastic athletic teams. The director of schools or the director's designee shall confer with the parent or legal guardian conducting the home school to determine that the student is academically eligible; and

(D) The student registers with the school the student's intent to participate in interscholastic athletics prior to August 1 of the school year.

(2) If an organization or an association that regulates interscholastic athletics adopts rules establishing minimum eligibility requirements for participation by home school students in interscholastic athletics at the organization's or association's member schools, then an LEA shall permit participation by home school students in accordance with such rules. This subdivision(e)(2) does not guarantee that a home school student trying out for an interscholastic sport will make the team, but only that the home school student shall not be prohibited from trying out for a sports team if the student is eligible under the rules of the organization or association.

(3) Any student who is ineligible for participation in interscholastic athletics at the time of withdrawal from a public or private school to enroll in a home school shall remain ineligible to participate in such activities as a home school student until the student has successfully completed one (1) grading period and reestablished eligibility.

(4) Any insurance provided by an LEA for participants in interscholastic athletics shall cover any participating home school student. If there is an additional premium for such coverage, the participating home school student shall be required to pay the premium.

(5) No LEA shall charge a home school student a participation fee for participating in an interscholastic sport that is not charged to students enrolled in the LEA's public schools who participate in the same sport.

(6) An organization or association that regulates interscholastic athletics shall not require a home school student participating in interscholastic athletics at a nonpublic school to pay full tuition as a condition of participation.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2012, the public welfare requiring it, and shall apply to participation in extracurricular athletics beginning with the 2012-2013 academic year.